

VZCZCXRO5041

PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHDA RUEHDF RUEHFL RUEHIK RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHLN
RUEHLZ RUEHPOD RUEHROV RUEHSR RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHSL #0339 2061316
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 241316Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1853
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS BRATISLAVA 000339

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KAWC](#) [LO](#)

SUBJECT: PM FICO EQUATES KARADZIC ARREST WITH NEED TO
INVESTIGATE SERB CIVILIAN DEATHS

¶1. (SBU) While the Slovak MFA issued a predictably positive statement welcoming the arrest of former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, PM Fico expressed a different personal opinion in a comment during a July 22 press conference. The MFA issued the following statement: "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic welcomes the arrest of Radovan Karadzic, who is accused of war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. The Slovak MFA appreciates this success of Serbia (sic) authorities and considers it as a proof that (the) new Serbian government began (sic) to fulfill aims needed for intensification of EU integration swiftly and without compromises. The Slovak Republic keeps support (sic) Serbia in the process towards EU integration."

¶2. (SBU) In response to a question at the press conference, PM Fico said: "It is very good that all war crimes are being investigated, and it is very good that everyone who carries responsibility for brutal behavior, for murders, will be investigated, prosecuted, and finally sentenced. In this spirit I am looking also on the arrest of this former politician. I wouldn't though resist making a comment. I think that it is equally needed to look at whether somebody carries responsibility for the murders of a large number of civilians in Serbia with the bombing. This is my position." (The PM appears to be referring to the 1999 NATO bombing campaign against the former Yugoslavia.) COMMENT: With this answer, the PM added an extra dimension to the official MFA declaration that simply welcomed Karadzic's arrest. Post notes that Russian Ambassador to NATO Rogozin commented on the arrest using very similar terms. Post is prepared to raise the PM's comments with the GOS as the Department deems appropriate. Post welcomes any background the Department may want to provide. END COMMENT.
OBSITNIK